



IV (Intravenous Device)

INTRAVENOUS DEVICE (IV device)

WHAT IS AN IV DEVICE?

An IV device is a small, hollow, plastic tube called a catheter that goes through the skin and into a vein.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF AN IV?

IV therapy is given for different reasons.

It can be used to:

- Replace fluids
- Give medicines, including antibiotics
- Add nutrients to the body

HOW IS AN IV INSERTED?

Usually the IV is placed in your hand or your arm. Sometimes it is placed in your leg or foot.

You will be sitting or lying down. A nurse or doctor will examine your arm to determine which vein will be used.

Once a vein is selected:

- A tourniquet will be placed above the area where the needle is inserted. This allows the vein to fill with blood.
- The site is cleaned with an antibacterial solution and allowed to air dry.
- The needle is inserted. There is a plastic cover over the needle called an IV catheter. The catheter may cause some temporary discomfort.

- The tourniquet and needle are removed once the catheter is in place.
- The catheter is secured with a clear, sterile dressing.

Fluids may be given through the IV continuously or intermittently. If fluids are given intermittently, the IV catheter will be clamped. A short tube with a twist-on cap will be attached to the catheter.

The IV catheter:

- Should be flushed every eight hours. Flushing an IV involves pushing a solution through your IV. You may feel a sudden sting or coolness when your IV is flushed.
- Will be moved to a new site at least every 72 hours (three days). It may be moved more often, if needed.

The catheter will be moved more often if there is:

- Infiltration (swelling at the site)
- Infection (redness and/or tenderness at the site)
- Pain



If your IV is continuous, it will be placed on a machine. The machine is called an IV pump. The pump controls how fast the fluid flows into the vein. The pump should be plugged in to keep the battery charged.

The pump has an alarm that makes a beeping sound when it is activated. The alarm may be activated if there is a problem with your IV, such as an empty bag or clogged or kinked tubing. Call the nurse if the alarm goes off.

Call the nurse if you have a problem at the IV site such as:

- Pain
- Redness
- Swelling
- Tenderness
- Hardness
- Leaking fluid
- Bleeding
- Warm to touch
- Loose tape
- Blood backing up into the IV tubing

POINTS FOR YOU TO REMEMBER:

To help prevent problems with your IV:

- Do not lie on the tubing.
- Do not turn the pump off.
- Do not lie on the IV site.
- Ask for assistance when going to the bathroom or shower. If your IV dressing gets wet, ask the nurse to check it.
- Make sure the IV is removed before you are discharged.
- Consult the nurse or hospital staff if you have questions or problems with your IV.

